



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

test that the Jackson letters were written in this code. It was further discovered that the same code was used by James A. Bayard when he was one of the commissioners for negotiating the Treaty of Ghent. It has since been learned that Monroe used this code in 1805 when he was minister to England. It was evidently therefore an official cipher.

EDMUND C. BURNETT.

THE EARL OF CARLISLE AND THE BOARD OF TRADE, 1779

IN November, 1779, the office of president of the Board of Trade and Plantations, which had been absorbed in the secretaryship of state for America in July, 1768, was revived, and the close connection which had existed between the Board and the American department for eleven years was destroyed. This was not an illogical step: the American war had destroyed the larger part of the *plantation* business of the Board, and its activities were now centred on *trade*, especially the African trade; the Secretary of State for America, on the other hand, had become primarily a war secretary, directing the British campaign against the rebellious colonists. The reasons, therefore, which had operated to make the Board of Trade an annex to the American department were no longer valid. It is the purpose of this note, however, to show that it was not on grounds of logical organization and efficient administration that the office of First Lord Commissioner for Trade and Plantations was re-established.

From the time of the first commission to the Board of Trade in 1696 until July, 1768, the great officers of state were named as members, but were excused from attendance at Board meetings; eight others, not holding any of the principal offices, were also named, and these eight constituted the working Board. The one first named was looked upon as president or First Lord and received a salary larger than that of his seven colleagues. In July, 1768, a new commission was issued in the same form as before, except that (1) a new great office, a secretaryship for America, had been evolved from the secretariat, and the Earl of Hillsborough, secretary of state for America since the creation of this new department in January, was named as a member of the Board along with the other principal officers; (2) seven rather than eight men were named as the active Board; (3) the usual clause excusing the principal officers from attendance was not extended to Hillsborough, who was expressly

ordered to attend Board meetings. The president of the Board had been Robert Nugent, later Viscount Clare; it was his name that was left out of the new commission, without, it would appear, due notice having been given him of his official decapitation.¹ Hillsborough thereupon took his seat at the head of the Board July 14, 1768,² and his successors, the Earl of Dartmouth and Lord George Germain, continued so to act until 1779. That the secretary for America was the official successor of the First Lord and a *bona fide* member of the Board was questioned but once during this period, but the decision was clear and definitive.³

By the summer of 1779 the plan to remove Germain from the Board was well under way, and he had lost, as well, the support of the king. He was, in fact, growing weary of attendance in the House of Commons and wished to obtain a peerage. To North's proposal on this head the king replied that "It would be an endless repetition to state my objections to decorating Lord Geo. Germain with a Peerage; he has not been of use in his department, and nothing but the most meritorious services could have wiped off his former misfortunes."⁴ In spite of this poor opinion of Germain's abilities and in spite of his constant complaint of not being consulted on matters affecting his department, both the king and North were anxious that he should retain the American seals. The immediate cause of his removal from the Board, however, was not concerned with the personal fortunes of Lord George, except in so far as North and the king did not feel it necessary to court his favor. It had to do rather with the problems that beset Mariner North, whose crew was mutinous and whose ship was foundering.

Without obscuring the main point it is not possible, nor is it necessary, to take up the details of the political complexities of the year 1779. Suffice it to say that in the early spring Lord Suffolk, secretary of state for the Southern Department, threatened to resign; the remnant of the Bedford party, headed by Gower, lord president, and Weymouth, secretary of state for the Northern Department, were discontented; Wedderburn, as always, was deep in intrigue.⁵ A new danger arose, in addition, in the person of Lord Carlisle,

¹ Smyth, *The Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, V. 148, Franklin to Galloway, July 2, 1768.

² Journal, Board of Trade, LXXV., minute under July 14.

³ In a matter of the nominating of clerks. Journal, Board of Trade, LXXXVI, 139.

⁴ Donne, *The Correspondence of George III. with Lord North*, II. 256, June 15, 1779.

⁵ On Wedderburn, British Museum, Add. MSS. 37384, f. 74, Robinson to George III., May 11, 1779.

lately returned from America, whither he had gone as one of the three commissioners bearing a sprig of olive to the rebellious colonists. Now out of a job, he was restless, and North was worried lest he declare war on the government.⁶ Carlisle, moreover, was the son-in-law of Gower, and as early as 1775 Gower had promised to use his influence to obtain for Carlisle a place that would be agreeable to him.⁷ This relationship between Gower and Carlisle, which was both personal and political, furnishes the key to our problem.

With the ministry in this unsettled state, the king was naturally anxious and distraught. He deplored the policy of drift pursued by North and unbosomed his discontent to John Robinson, secretary to the treasury, and thus secretary to North, famous for his manipulation of the secret service money in the great cause of parliamentary corruption and control. He especially deplored the fact that North was constantly lacking in civility to Gower, who was to be placated at all costs.⁸ Not only did the king urge Robinson to prevail upon North to modify his attitude toward Gower, he also put the question directly to North and even indicated the method of approach. The resulting action may best be followed in the correspondence of the king, Robinson, North, and Germain.

In April the resignation of Suffolk seemed imminent, and Lord Hillsborough was proposed as his successor; this was acceptable to the king, "but before Lord North arranges this", he wrote to North, "he must somehow see Lord Carlisle is not offended. I fear Lord North's language to him will give rise to this, unless he is somehow satisfied; and the disobliging Lord Gower ought certainly to be avoided. By this I do not mean that Lord Carlisle ought to be Secretary in preference to Lord Hillsborough, but that a[n] office of business of a secondary kind ought to be found for him."⁹

Suffolk's death took place before his resignation, but no immediate step was taken to fill his place, Weymouth taking charge of both the Northern and Southern departments. Hillsborough was still the favored candidate, but Lord North's "frequent changes of opinion . . . stop all business", wrote the king to Robinson.

I told Lord North [he continued] that Lord Gower will certainly resign if Lord Hillsborough gets the Seals unless some provision is

⁶ Brit. Mus., Add. MSS. 34416, f. 264 and following; correspondence between North and Eden, February 10-14, 1779. Hist. MSS. Comm., *Report XV*, Appendix, part VI., *Carlisle MSS.*, p. 419, North to Carlisle, February 14, 1779.

⁷ Hist. MSS. Comm., *Carlisle MSS.*, p. 303, Gower to Carlisle, November 25, 1775.

⁸ Brit. Mus., Add. MSS. 37284, ff. 93-170 *passim*.

⁹ Donne, *op. cit.*, II. 244, April 6, 1779.

made for Lord Carlisle. Lord North then reverted to separating the First Lord of Trade from the Seals, but Lord George Germain will certainly never consent to that. . . . Lord North, if he will take a decided part, is sure of my support and consequently may easily bring things into tone: but I fear his irresolution is only equalled by a certain vanity of wanting to ape the Prime Minister without any of the requisite qualities; if he will take a clear line and get as vacancies occur the properest men the circumstances will permit and content himself with being acquainted with whatever is going forward and confine himself to the finance branch, he may still be a very useful minister and may gain real reputation, but he must fill up the vacant offices and get the Irish affairs into some trim.¹⁰

The necessity of forming as "strong a system of administration as we can against the ensuing session of Parliament" and of giving "at the same time every satisfaction possible to Lord Gower and his friends"¹¹ moved North to approach Germain, but not before the king had read and modified his letter.¹²

No system can, in my opinion, be firm and desirable [wrote North to Germain] which leaves uneasiness in the minds of any part of the ministry. I believe that Lord Gower has it in mind to introduce Lord Carlisle into public business, and no way of doing it seems to me so proper and convenient as the separation of the Board of Trade from the American Seals, and the appointment of Lord Carlisle to be First Commissioner of Trade.

The successful issue of this business depended on the good will of Germain, "whose emolument, credit, power, or dignity" would in no wise be diminished, while government would be strengthened.¹³ Lord George professed no surprise at this suggestion, knowing that "it had been thought upon many months ago by those who have the honour of being consulted by you". (A nasty fling!) He was willing, however, to submit to His Majesty's pleasure, degrading though it might be, but he would prefer to retire entirely and fully to gratify Lord Gower and Lord Carlisle by allowing Lord Carlisle to have the "Seals with the Board of Trade".¹⁴ This letter was shown to the king, who wrote North:

I would advise that, after mentioning my approbation of Lord George's conduct on this occasion, yet that I differ with him in opinion as its being a degrading of his office; that I look upon it as very differ-

¹⁰ Brit. Mus., Add. MSS. 37384, f. 133, August 13, 1779.

¹¹ Hist. MSS. Comm., *Report IX.*, Appendix, part III., Stopford-Sackville MSS., p. 97, North to Germain, September 10, 1779; also in *Report on the Stopford-Sackville Manuscripts* (1910), II. 138.

¹² Donne, *op. cit.*, II. 282, king to North, September 10, 1779.

¹³ See note 11.

¹⁴ Stopford-Sackville MSS., *loc. cit.*, Germain to North, September 13, 1779.

ent, it placing him in every respect on the same line as the two antient Secretaries, and that it will place Lord Carlisle in an executive office, not one of direction of measures, (in) which it might not have been right to place the signer of the proclamation of last year as far as regards America.¹⁵

North followed this line in a letter to Germain, whereupon Lord George asked only that the king grant him an interview.¹⁶

Negotiations were prolonged for some weeks longer: Sandwich was worried as late as October 16 because North had gone out of town without writing to Carlisle,¹⁷ but on October 19 North sent a letter to Carlisle through Robinson, as well as one to Gower to be sent at Robinson's discretion.¹⁸ By October 27 the affair was settled. "I am glad to find by Lord North's note", wrote the king to Robinson, "that Lord Carlisle has accepted the office of First Lord of Trade." But the underlying reason for his appointment was not forgotten; the king continued, "Am I by the step Lord Carlisle takes to expect any change in the sentiments of Lord Gower?"¹⁹ To make the office more attractive and to win the more active support of Carlisle and Gower, the salary which Carlisle received was double that of previous first lords, £2000 rather than £1000.²⁰ The new commission was dated November 15; it provided once more for eight members other than the great officers, and in the clause excusing the great officers from attendance the secretary for the American Department was included.²¹ The Earl of Carlisle took his seat at the Board on November 17,²² but he was soon made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, being succeeded at the Board by Lord Grant-ham. The separation of the Board from the American department continued until 1782, when both were abolished.

The whole episode is no less instructive than interesting. North and his royal master were grasping at straws which might carry them "well through our [their] embarrassed situation". Policy was subservient to politics, administration to jobbery. The grand strategy underlying the removal of the American secretary from the Board of Trade and the re-establishment of the office of First

¹⁵ Donne, *op. cit.*, II. 283, September 27, 1779.

¹⁶ Stopford-Sackville MSS., *loc. cit.*, p. 98, North to Germain, September 29, 1779; Germain to North, October 1, 1779.

¹⁷ Hist. MSS. Comm., *Report X*, Appendix, part VI., *Abergavenny MSS.*, p. 26, Sandwich to Robinson, October 16, 1779.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 27, North to Robinson, October 19, 1779.

¹⁹ Brit. Mus., Add. MSS. 37384, f. 170, king to Robinson, October 27.

²⁰ C. O. 389: 39, p. 137.

²¹ Patent Roll 3777, 20 George III., part 1, mem. 17.

²² Journal, Board of Trade, LXXXVII. 225.

Lord, the object of which was to gain the continuance of Gower's support by giving his son-in-law a lucrative office, failed; Gower would not consent to remain in office and, along with Weymouth, resigned in November. The ministry of Lord North was breaking up: this was but a prelude to his own resignation and to the failure of personal royal government.

ARTHUR HERBERT BASYE.